

N^o 17

The Beautiful Sanctuary,

AND

The Holy Offering.

A
S E R M O N

PREACH'D in the Parish-Church of
All Saints Barking, LONDON,
ON

MAY the 13th 1705.

At the First Opening of the said Church,
After its having been Re-paired without, and new Pewed,
and in several Respects Improved, as well as Beautified
within.

*Maximè Sacerdoti hoc convenit ornare Dei Templum decore Congruo, ut etiam hoc
Cultu Aula Domini resplendeat. Ambros. Lib. Offic. 2d. Cap. 21mo.*

Καὶ ἀγορεύς μὲν καὶ Βαλαρεῖα ποιεῖσιν οἱ πολλοὶ, ἐκκλησίας δὲ ἔχει, καὶ παντὰ μάλλον,
ἢ τούτο. — μὴ μοι εἴπῃς — πολλὴ ἐστὶν ἡ δαπάνη.
Ἐπεὶ γὰρ μοι εἰ Βασιλεὺς σὺ ἐκέλευσεν οἰκοδομῆσαι οἰκίαν ἵνα ἐκτὶ κατ'αλύοι,
ἐκ αὐτῶν παντὰ ἐποίησας; νῦν ἔν Βασιλείᾳ ἐστὶ τὸ Χριστὸς τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἡ οἰκοδο-
μὴ. μὴ τὸ ἀνάλωμα ἴδῃς, ἀλλὰ τὸν καρπὸν λύγῃς. Crysost. Homil. in
Acta Apost. 8ταυά.

By *JOHN GASKARTH, D. D.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Walter Kettilby*, at the *Bishop's Head*, in *St. Paul's
Church-Yard*, M DCC V.



TO HIS
Loving, and truly Beloved Friends,
THE
PARISHIONERS
OF
All Saints Barking, LONDON.

GENTLEMEN,

IT is at your pressing Request that this Sermon comes abroad in Print, and a pure Answering of that on my Part. Indeed you have a Claim of Right upon me, that it should be yours after what manner you please, which, as in my Relation to you I must acknowledge, I am therefore obliged to comply with, let the Inconvenience be what it will to my self. I know the good Intent in some of you, [to whom the present Advantages of our House of Prayer, or our Parochial Church, in the ordinary Stile, are mostly owing] and what influenced your Desires of having this Publick,

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The PREFACE.

lick, that you favourably judged it might be a means to incite People to some special Duties, which inseparably follow the Love of God, and of his Solemn Service, and which can never be refused where that is the Principle in the Heart.

And that this Discourse, and my whole Ministry among you, which, by the Grace of God, shall ever be discharged with my best Endeavours, and sincerest Affections towards you, may have their Effects in you, and in my self, to true Christian Attainments, and Holiness in all Respects, and so to render us at last, in the Apostle's Phrase, meet, or fit to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, shall ever be the Prayer, and Business, and Study of

Your Hearty Well-wisher,

And Friend, and Servant,

In Christ Jesus,

J. GASKARTH.

ISAIAH lx. 13.

The Glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the Fir-tree, the Pine-tree, and the Box together, to beautifie the Place of my Sanctuary, and I will make the Place of my Feet glorious.

THIS Chapter plainly refers to Gospel-Times, as the great, and radiant Light it declares that should rise upon the World, which, must not be Interpreted with regard to Natural Things, the Outward and Sensible Luminaries of the World, that are still the same, and shine forth after a like manner; but in a Spiritual Sense concerning the Larger, and farther Displays of Divine Truths reserved for this Opportunity in the Counsels of Providence, and to be afforded then; I say this Chapter plainly refers to Gospel-Times, as the great, and radiant Light it declares, rightly understood in its just Notion must convince us; *viz.* That 'tis a Prophecy of the Evangelical State, and Doctrines, which Holy Doctrines, besides several of the Natural Offspring of *Abraham*, (those his more Genuine Children of his Faith, endued with his Probity to receive a most evident Revelation of God,) many other Nations should embrace, and profess, as not only is Literally said, *Ver. 3.* and again *that the Forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee;* that is, unite themselves to the Christian Church, or become Members thereof, but is after a Figure more emphatically denoted by the *abundance of the Sea* that

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should

should be converted, which always signifies in the Language of the Prophets, **Number, and Multitude**, *Ver. 5, 11.* the blessed Event, and Accomplishment, whereof we now both happily See, and Enjoy, so that 'tis not to be questioned but that the Words of the Text in this Coherence, have their Relation to our own Times.

Indeed it must be confessed that according to an Allegorical Acception, that so runs through the greatest Part of the whole Scriptures, and is most observable in this Prophet, they may be explained of the Living Church here on Earth, which Earth in its full Amplitude, and distinctly from Heaven that is stiled God's *Throne*, is frequently called *his Footstool*, *Isa. vi. 1.* and these Holy Persons, whether of different Degrees, or Natural Tempers, thus represented first expressly, *Kings, Gentiles*, coming over in vast Throngs to the Pure Worship or Service of God, and then by the Metaphor of divers Trees; These Holy Persons are his True Temples, in whom he dwells after the most appropriate Manner, to whom he is united in the freest Communion of himself, or his Graces, with whom, even as the Apostle tells us, *he is one Spirit*, *1 Cor. vi. 17.*) Yet the Words *שְׂכָנֵי* likewise may be taken for material Sanctuaries, as may be inferred from the great Riches, which are no ways requisite to make good Christians, from the Abundance of Gold, and the peculiar Stores for building the most esteemed Timber, that those many Converts were to bring along with them to this Holy Society, the Place thus still maintaining its Truths in the Letter, and in the Figure; and as likewise this common vulgar Acception as well as the former, has the Authority of *St. Jerom* for it, with other Commentators, and is also confirmed by the Practice of the whole Christian World, who ever
thought

thought themselves obliged as they were able, to erect, and dedicate sumptuous Structures to the Honour of God, which must be reckoned a bounden Duty, if either the owning his Propriety in all things, and our solemn Gratitude, or our Publick Worship of him be so.

Now in this Sense I shall Discourse of the Text, First Explaining the Principal Words, or Terms thereof by other Places of Sacred Scripture, which, tho' not so answering my present Purpose, yet must have its Use, as 'twill not only more ascertain, but fix upon us, the Notion, and Sentiment of these Things, that so often occur in the Inspired Books.—the Place of God's Sanctuary, or the Place of his Feet, which he here declares should be beautified, and made glorious, mean the same thing, *viz.* Holy Oratories, or Houses consecrate to God, and his Worship. The Reference is plain to the Tabernacle, and Temple, both according to his own Appointment, and the Pattern represented to *Moses* in the Mount, *Exod.* xxv. 40. — each of these, ~~the~~ Tabernacle, and Temple, being so much the same, the Latter so copying forth the former, tho' of richer Materials, had several Distinctions, the Court of the People, a peculiar Division or Apartment for the Priests, where they offered their Sacrifices, which the People might not enter, and beyond that another Recess, solely reserved, and separate to God, which none was to have Admission into, but the High-Priest alone, but once a Year neither, when he made the general Expiation or Atonement; (Not now to carry these Shadows to their Substance in our Saviour Christ, what was really accomplished in him, and by him) in this inmost Oracle, or Holy of Holies, were the Ark of the Testimony, the Mercy-Seat, covering that, and Two Cherubins, which were Images after the Pourtraicture

of a Man standing on each End of the Mercy-Seat, with Two of their Wings meeting aloft over it, and the other Two extended along on the Wall, having their Faces towards one another, and as 'twere looking down to the Mercy-Seat.— Whence, as God is said to be present especially, and reside here, very frequently *to dwell*, and sometimes *to sit between the Cherubins*, Psal. xcix. 1. to speak explicitly, and according to sensible, and humane Resemblance, (in which, God our Saviour, who was particularly in the Oeconomy of the Divine Persons, the God of *Israel*, often appeared to that People,) as a Document and Prefage of his Future Incarnation; the Mercy-Seat having the Name of the Propitiatory; might have been stiled *his Footstool*, and the Wings of the Cherubins meeting together above that, called *his Seat*. God stiles one of these *his Throne*, and the other *the Place of the Soles of his Feet*, where he would dwell in the midst of the Children of *Israel* for ever, Ezek. xliii. 7. 'Tis directed to this inward Recess, what David says with respect to himself, even when he was in God's House, that with an awful Fear *he would worship towards his Holy Temple*, Psal. v. 7. And what he exhorts others to do likewise, *Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his Footstool, for he is holy*, (Psal. xcix. 5.) And again engaging, and promising for his People, *we will go into his Tabernacle, we will worship at his Footstool*, Psal. cxxxii. 7.

Now the Advantages of this Publick Devotion, or Addressing God here, what they were, what particularly explained his *Schechina*, his Dwelling, who is omnipresent, in this Place, which must be carried to all all others set apart to him, and his solemn Service, what special Acts this denoted on his Side, what Benefits he then did and still bequeaths to Mankind, thus appro-

appropriately assembled before him, that we may have a full Satisfaction in a matter that so concerns us, he himself acquaints us (besides what old *Jacob* tells us, 1 *Gen.* xxviii. 12, &c. that the Throngest Ministry of Angels is here,) *In all Places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee, Exod.* xx. 24. whence the Tabernacle is called the Tabernacle of Meeting, viz. God's Meeting the People there, (devoutly attending him) on this Account of his Blessing them, as he himself very frequently interprets that Phrase *אֵל מוֹעֵד* *Exod.* xxix. 42. xxx. 6, 36. *Numb.* xvii. 4. by repeating the same Word as to its Original in its Formation in *Niphal*, *נִפְעַל* (then signifying *Convenire, Congregari, Scil. Statuo Loco, et Tempore,*) at the Door of the Tabernacle, *where I will meet you, or meet with you.* Which his Meeting them at the Tabernacle was so often symbolically demonstrated, or in a visible Representation, by a Cloud, and Fire descending upon it, *Exod.* xl. 34. The several Particulars of his Blessing People Convened, or Congregated in Consecrate Places to Meet him, and for his Meeting them, he expresses, and declares to *Solomon*, that whatever Distresses they should be under, they Addressing him there in a true Contrition, and Humbling of themselves, *be would pardon their Sins, and hear their Prayers,* that must be understood, as to the proper Requests of their Prayers, and what would be really for their Benefit, 2 *Chron.* vii. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. which Blessings thus engaged to this his Sanctuary in more plenteous Measures, must be referred, as I said before to all other his Houses Dedicate to him, where People jointly resort to worship him, as is implied in that Prophecy of *Malachi*, Ch. i. 11. That at length such Houses should be thro' the whole World, *from the rising of the Sun even unto the going*

going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every Place Incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure Offering: for my Name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.—

Thus then the Text being brought down to Gospel-Times, and to us Christians, to whom it evidently belongs, with the Divine Intercourse, and Blessings that were afforded after a freer Manner in the Jewish Temple to the Devout Addressers there; it having this Reference both to the Thing it sets forth, and the Benefits following, or attending thereon, plainly imports this Proposition, That Beauteous Sanctuaries, or Places of Worship, adorned with all the Advantages of the Creation, Things not only of the highest Value in the Esteem of Men, but of the finest Composition, and most excellent in their own kind, that such so adorned should be then erected, or that Christians should erect, and Dedicate such, the Prophecy carrying the Force of a Command 'tis the same Thing that God declared he would do, *Ver. 7.* as he acts in, and by Men, thro' the Influences of his Spirit upon them, *viz.* incite them in the Days of the *Messias* to such publick Expressions of their Honour of him, and so indeed perform them himself. *I will glorifie the house of my Glory.—* Now this being the Doctrine of the Text, that we see was delivered with Regard to Christians, I shall Discourse of it in this Method, and on these Heads.

And as it is an unquestionable Principle, that we ought to express our Thankfulness to God after a general Manner, with respect to whatever Bounties or Donatives we have from him, our Estates, our Strength, our Bodily Faculties, as well as of our Minds, returning all these back upon him, and humbly devoting them to his Service, which is employing them as we should,
and

and to our best Advantage; and that likewise we must Honour and Reverence him by outward and visible Instances, or Acts, that will ever follow sincere and just Affections towards him in our Hearts. This being in general laid down, I shall

First, Observe the great Expediency of our complying with this Doctrine of the Text, nay the strict and indispensable Obligation of Justice that lies upon us to this purpose.

Secondly, I shall set forth the Benefits, or Advantages redounding from it to our selves.

Thirdly, I shall confirm all this from Scripture, God's own express Command, and Direction in this Behalf. And

Fourthly, Answer what Objections may possibly be brought against all this.

First then, To observe the great Expediency of our complying with this Prophetick Doctrine, and Precept, viz. That we should *beautifie God's Sanctuaries, or Temples, and make the Place of his Feet glorious*, nay, the Justice that lies on us to do so.

And if we consider God, and our selves, that he being an all-perfect, all-sufficient Nature, and possessing a stable Happiness in himself in the utmost Degree, which, no Being, that must of Necessity be made by him, could give the least Accession to, and therefore solely from his infinite Goodness to render us happy in a like Bliss, and Partnership with him, created Man after his own Image, of a Spiritual Substance, indued with the Faculties of Intellect, and Will, the First of a Largeness to comprehend every Truth or Work of God, while thro' a right Application of the Second, viz. his Liberty, he retained his Disposition to receive, and partake of the Divine Light, and behold things in it,

it, while he chus'd his Enjoyments with God, and so in the Frame, and Tendency of his Mind was capable of those purest, those highest Pleasures, God's, as it were, both Knowledge, and Joys communicated to him;— If we thus consider God, and then our selves, how we are shamefully turned from him, and have set our Affections on Creature-Vanities, Delights, or Entertainments taken in thro' our Senses, which as they are indulged even sink us down into the Species below us, degrade us from our kind; how his Heavenly Beams, our Communion with him, because of our horribly depraved Temper are stopt, and intercepted, we so ignorant, we in such Darkness, where a clear Perception most concern us; that we are in this miserable fallen State, under the dismal Fates that must attend Sinners, that belong to those that have forsaken God, and further to inance our Guilt, and Condemnation, nevertheless that we happily reserved for such Benefits, enjoy the Advantage of our Blessed Saviour's coming in our Flesh, *which so many Prophets, nay even Kings have wished for in vain*, Luke x. 24. and the actual Accomplishment of whatever could be done, besides what must be our own Performance, towards our Recovery, he having both fully paid our Ransom, and proposed the Means, nay copied them in himself, by which this Recovery must be compleated on our Part, and plainly informed us of an After-state in different Allotments of Bliss, or Misery to enforce the Observance upon us; After both these ways, Precept, and Example, with the most efficacious, prevailing Motive set before us, having chalked our our Behaviour, what we must of Necessity do, if we would be saved, lest our Blindness should not discern it; And as the Recompence of his bitter Sufferings, that were wholly meritorious, not
being

being undergone on his own Account, and so deserving of God's greatest Favours to be dispensed where he pleased, having also bestowed his Blessed Spirit in this Opportunity to afford us a Demonstration whose Purchase this was, more plenteously on the World called by his Name, thro' which Advantages we should have arrived at a truly Christian, more eminent Holiness; yet we have shamefully gone on to resist, and defeat all his Love, all his Labour, all the Light, all the Strength, he procured for us, and bequeathed to us, of his Doctrine, and of the Holy Advocate he left behind him to transact in our Souls. We have not submitted our Wills, and our Desires to his Pattern, and Conduct, but still obstinately followed our evil Propensions instead of his Evangelical Rules, and Counsels; — If we consider all this on God's Part, and ours likewise, and that still we have the Privilege of Repentance allowed us, and Freedom to Address our offended Creator thro' this great Intercessor, his Beloved Son, for the more Liberal Supplies of his Spirit to this Purpose; as we have such a Gratitude to answer towards God, and such an infinite Concern, on the Account of our Sins to supplicate his Pardon, and because of our Frailties that our Sins have made, to request the continual Communications of his Grace; as we are so obliged constantly to offer up our Praises, and our Prayers, which may be best done with the just Fervour that is proper thereto, in publick Assemblies, among the mutual Excitements of one another, we must conclude that 'tis highly requisite, that 'tis indispensably incumbent upon us, that we should erect appropriate Houses for this Service, an united Worship being both a more solemn owning of God, and of more Efficacy on our Behalf, not only that it more invigorates our Devotion, and so promotes a better Disposition, or Habit

in us for Communion with God, and participating from him, but as he has declared, he will be especially present there, in his Heavenly Blessings, *Exod. xx. 24.* From these Premises we must thus conclude, and that also 'tis requisite, because of the great Transcendency of his Being, and his infinite Beneficence, his manifold Bounties, whose Graces in us, whose Bequests without us are all that we either are, or have, and whose inward Strivings, or Gifts of his Spirit thro' our Lord's Mediation, he still continues to us, notwithstanding our Sins, that so oppose them; I say because of the great Transcendency of his Being, and his infinite Beneficence, we must think it requisite that we should erect such Structures to him, wherein we may *serve* him as the Apostle advises, *Heb. xii. 28. with Reverence, and Godly Fear*, so stately in their Form, so rich in their Materials consisting of the most precious Parts of Nature within our Acquest, so august, and so resplendent, of such beauteous Symmetry, so awfully solemn, such a Master-piece of the utmost Skill that Men have attained, or God has bestowed on them, such sumptuous Palaces for the Great King, as may somewhat express to our Senses, and our Fancies, or to our Minds by their Means, his Sovereign Majesty, whom we adore, and that we referr whatever we possess to him, and love nothing in Comparison of him, permit no Object to share our Hearts with him, but consecrate all his Gifts we have, whether within us, or without us, to his Glory, this we must reckon upon due Notices of God, and our selves, very requisite, a manifest Duty.

And such was the Sentiment of Holy *David* concerning the just and proper Grandeur of Places dedicate to Almighty God, or set apart to his Service. For thus he speaks with respect to the Temple which *Solomon* his Son

Son was to build, *the work is great, for the Palace is not for Man, but for the Lord God*, 1 Chron. xxix. 1. as he had declared before, Chap. xxii. 5. *the House that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical*. And he thought it a Trespafs on the plainest Equity, an undecent, and unjust thing, that even a King should have a nobler Edifice for his Use, or State, than God had for his Publick Worship, and his Intercourse with Men. Thus then he bespeaks the Prophet Nathan, *Lo I dwell in an house of Cedar, but the ark of the Covenant of the Lord remaineth under Curtains*, 2 Sam. vii. 2. 1 Chron. xvii. 1. and therefore he was resolved with the Approbation of that Prophet to build a great, and sumptuous Temple for *that Sacred Symbol* of the Divine Presence, or to be God's Dwelling Place among that People. But those Two eminently Inspired Men, *Nathan* and *David*, only dictated from their own religious Temper and Affections, and not from the *Spirit*, for God countermanded them, as we are told. However he so accepted this pious Intent, that on the Account thereof, he was pleased to engage a Long Succession of Temporal Blessings, not only to this devout Prince himself, but to his Offspring after him.

And this may justly reprove those Persons, whether Kings, or others, who have Mansions of their own, far more costly, and better adorned, than the Churches are, to which they belong; as such inferiour, such mean Houses dedicate to God, and for our greatest Benefit of his Publick Worship, very often joyned by the lofty Roofs of some stiled Gentleman, that the Disparity, and the Reproach may appear the greater, we may commonly observe in this our so boastedly reformed Nation, more commonly I am afraid than in any other, where Christianity is the professed Faith, and Religion. The Meanness and Rudeness of which whole Fabricks, the poor Utensils for the several

Parts of Divine Service, and the even sordid, and neglected Furniture quite throughout, would by no means be endured, where such Persons dwell themselves, which can only be accounted for, that they love themselves, their worse Part, which is the Principle of their carnal Desires, and the Mammon of this World, that administers thereto, better than they do their Heavenly Father, and are more concerned to indulge, and gratifie, whether their extravagant Fancies, or their Covetousness, than to serve him, be sure after the most acceptable Manner *in the Beauty of Holiness*, viz. in decent Oratories in, and with the unanimous Devotion of their Christian Brethren. This is a strange irreligious Temper which one would think could not be found where the Gospel-Revelation is embraced, and owned, nay not even among those who believe a God, and themselves his Creatures.

One might expostulate with these People, as the Prophet did with his Country-men the *Jews*; *Is it time, O Ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and the House of God, his special Habitation in the midst of you lie waste, or neglected, Haggai, i. 14.*

What we Dedicate to any Person should always be proportionate to the Character he bears, or our Debt of Gratitude and the Obligations we are under to him. It would be an indecorous thing to offer that which is a Liberal Gift, or Largess in respect of a Peasant, or to him, to a King; And it should be of a higher Estimate, a greater Share of our Estates, or Possessions, that we present to God, (whose still they are) than even to a King for any Favours we can receive from him. It would exceedingly condemn us if we offer less, and we must thereby incur the Reprehension of the Prophet upon these *Jews* mentioned before, *Offer it now unto thy Governour, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of Hosts, Mal. i. 8.*

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Where the Sense of God's constant Bounties or Benefits, which we live upon, the necessary Measures or Supports he affords us, the Overplus he gives us, where this maintains its just Vigour in the Hearts of Men, it will ever induce them, it will ever also have its Effect to these Returns upon him, that they still be presenting him some way or other with what he may at any Time command from us, with what unalienably is his own. This stands upon the clearest Rule of Justice and Gratitude, a principal Branch theteof, prompts forcibly to it, that we should thus Reverence our greatest Benefactor, who gave us our selves with whatever valuable we have in us, whatever outward Stores, that possibly might be reckoned to our wise Contrivance, our Industry, or Skill; as he has assured us of an endless State of Felicity, or Bliss in the other World, thro' our Saviour Christ, we duly complying with the alone Terms that can qualifie us for it; that we render him back again, as it were, after that immediate manner some of his Temporal Largeesses afforded us, if not erect Houses to his Honour, where we may have been prevented by the Piety of our Ancestors, yet furnish these religious Memorials of him, where our Thanksgivings are most properly offered up, and we may also most effectually supplicate for farther Blessings, furnish these with all due Requisites for his Worship, and Service, which Instinct of Gratitude, which Dictate of Justice we have exemplified in *Moses*, when he Sang his Deliverance from the *Ægyptian Armies*, *The Lord is my God, and I will prepare him an Habitation; my Father's God, and I will exalt him*, *Exod. xv. 2.*— And this same Justice, a transcendent Affection rightly determined, a Love, and Honour of our Heavenly Father above our selves, and all things besides, will not permit us to be content with an ordinary Provision, what is barely irreproveable in these Holy Oratories, where God so vouch-
safes.

safes to converse with us ; but will carry us to adorn them after the best manner, and render them as glorious, as our Estates, or Receipts from him will any ways allow, while we shall then in this pious Disposition, and under the Primary Impulses of Justice towards God, truly think, that our first Expences are due here, and be sure shall never grudge them in this Respect, as thus we present them more immediately to the Creator and Donor of tm , tho' most apply them to our benefit too:

Which brings me to the *Second* Thing, *viz.* To Consider our own Advantages in this Matter, the Benefits redounding to our selves from this indispensable Justice, or Gratitude, our presenting God more immediately with our Substance, and expending it to his Honour, whose Gift it was, *viz.* our erecting such Houses for his Worship, or so adorning them after the best manner, still preserving a Religious Decency, and not trespassing on that, as may express our due Regard to His Sovereign Majesty, and both declare the Bent of our Desires, and our strongest Devotion to him, and excite this likewise.

We receive from our Senses the *Idea's*, and Notices of most things, and most of our Passions derive thence, as we are affected with some Objects or Occurrences that first touch them, and cause such Motions in our Animal Spirits, and so pass to our Minds thro' them, our Bodies being of the same kind with the outward World, and next to its Actings, or Impressions upon us, and the *Mediums* thereof. Which Notices, and Passions thus advanced in this Mediation, when they approach our Faculty of Reason may be governed, and managed to the Purposes of Religion, and to promote the proper Affections that belong thereto.—— Thus we find that the Sight of an afflicted Person in any sort, raises our Compassion, and strongly prompts us to afford the Relief that we are capable of.

And

And when we meet with an impious Reflection on our Blessed Saviour, or his Heavenly Gospel thro' the Organs of Hearing, we presently feel an Abhorrence in us, so when we behold a just Proportion, a proper Symmetry, and Relation of Parts to one another, whether in Reality, or Picture only; or when we are entertained with Harmonious Sounds fitted to Divine Hymns, or Anthems, a sweet Complacency, conveying it self thro' our Eyes, or Ears, seizes *our Minds*, and carries *these* in suitable Raptures according to their Degree along with them,—— and likewise after the same manner, when we are in Sacred Oratories, August Palaces to the Heavenly King, being beautified with proper Utensils, and Ornaments, the Melodious Organ among the rest, that so first moves our Souls, or Spirits, and then assists that Movement begun to such Devotional Heights; when we are in these Houses of God with these just Advantages, Houses distinguished from all others, with the special Marks of their Appropriation to him upon them, a religious Dread, and more fervent Affections must needs possess us, if we have but any Dispositions of Piety belonging to us; which Holy Impressions we may retain upon us, and still improve to more vigorous Flames, and more intense Acts of our indispensable Worship of our Maker, if we please, God raising the same Affections within. Our Senses commonly are the Inlets of our Passions (as remarked before), and when they are excited from the decent Solemnity of God's House, and the Things relating to his Service, they may be rendred very useful to us in our Holy Performances, our Prayers, or our Praises, and our Minds may take hold of a main Advantage to strengthen their Intenseness, or Fervours therein.

Indeed Devotion, or Prayer, is a Spiritual Exercise, and consists in the pure Acts of our Souls, where the Faculties of Understanding and Will, are subjected, and from
whence

whence our Behaviour becomes voluntary, and in our own Power, either to comply with the Grace of God, or repel, and resist it. That which renders our Worshy of any Esteem, or Account with God, is the Part that our Spirits bear in it, and 'twill be utterly rejected, being only mere Clock-work, where these are not concerned: But our Spirits may be invigorated by means of our Senses, which way soever the Influence be, whether those receive the first Impression from our Organized Matter, or communicate their pure Sentiments to that, as they operate in Consortship with one another, and as they do so, the Motion may commence on either Side; tho' with respect to our present State, as our Souls are united to these gross Bodies, we converse with this outward World, thro' them, and the strongest Movements we find in us, and at least the Hints of most of our Knowledge are let into us by our Senses. We can seldom be so abstracted to arrive at the inward Workings of our Minds, their Thoughts, and Aspirings within themselves, where sensible Objects did not strike first, and afforded the Occasion, or, as one may say, started the Game.

Tho' it must be confessed, that there are some pure Acts of our Minds, Demonstrations, and Arguments, with relation to Truth, and immaterial Things, which we may evidently discover in us, that could not come from our Senses, or in their Mediation; but these are but few, and in this Animal State we rarely have, or can have the Happiness of such. Hence therefore while we are in this Scene of Mortality, (when we are delivered from it, the Manner of their Operations will be otherwise) we must borrow Help from our Senses, and our Passions likewise first excited thence, even in Matters of Religion, and observe all the Methods to heighten, and advance them, where they have this true Tendency; as we may cause them

them to enter the Divine Service, and both inflame our *Spirits*, by their means, and fix *them* into a steady Worship, and Devotion, if we'll but rightly use the Opportunity they give us in the constant Concourse of Grace with the same.

Let us now come to the *Third* Particular, *viz.* confirm all this from Scripture, regarding us likewise, as the Coherence of the Text imports, *God's own express Command, and Direction*, which be sure are ever Effects both of his Wisdom, and Goodness towards us, or founded in our Advantage, and what is most beneficial for us. He commanded the *Israelites* to build him a Sanctuary, for a gracious Purpose without question, *that he might dwell among them*, *Exod.* xxv. 8. and he shewed *Moses* its Pattern in the Mount, very probably forming the plyant Air into an exact Resemblance of it, in all its Proportions, with the Distinction of its Materials, and the divers Instruments that were to be used in that Legal Service, which he was charged several Times to observe to the least Particular, —xxv. 9. And this he so attended, and fixed on his Fancy, that he could judge of the whole, and the Justness of all its Parts, when finished and set up, *Exod.* xxxix. 43. as God also represented their several Parts of that curious Work to the Fancies of others imployed therein, *into whose hearts he is said to have put wisdom, that they might make all he had commanded Moses*, *Exod.* xxxi. 3, 6. This was God's own Model, and Designment, and a glorious one too in every respect, of its Figure, its Symmetry, its Artful Composure, and consisting of the most valuable things in Nature, the most precious Stones, the choicest Timber, the purest Metals, the most curiously wrought Silken Curtains, of the noblest Colours, Blue, Purple, and Scarlet, such a Tabernacle God required, as because of its pompous Appearance, and Richness, might both afford the People

an Opportunity to express their deserved Thankfulness to him in their Liberal Returns of his so plenteous Temporal Bounties, as it were, upon himself again, and also command their bounden Reverence on the solemn Occasions of their Recourse to it; the which exceeding Richness of this Tabernacle, every thing appertaining to the Ministry thereof was to answer, *the holy Garments, the Vestments of the Priests were to be made for Beauty, and for Glory*, *Exod. xxviii. 2, 40.* as is there described. Such a Tabernacle God required of the *Jews*, while they were in their travelling State. But when he brought them into their promised Land, and gave them Peace, and not only the greatest Increase at Home, but the Wealth of the Nations round about them, he then commanded a fixt Habitation, *1 Chron. xxii. 2, 5, 9.* yet more stately and magnificent, a solid Edifice, all of hewed Stone of the choicest sorts, Marble, Porphyrie, in a vast abundance for the numerous Pillars of the several Courts, that of the Gentiles, that of the *Jews*, and for the Pavement of the whole spacious Plan, the Apartment, as one may say, of the *Lay-Israelites*, and of the Priests, called properly the Temple, and God's Reserve, the Holy of Holies, the Floor of which last we are informed to have been all laid with Porphyrie; and as to its Timber, where that was required, of the most magnified Cedars of *Lebanon*, with other Trees also of the rarest, and best Kinds. A Lasting Edifice of durable Materials (but their Sins destroyed it), not inferiour neither in the Artifice of its Parts, but with respect to both its Dimensions, and Height far more august, infinitely transcending the first Tabernacle, adorned more abundantly with Nature's chief Treasure, its whole Inside, as likewise of the most holy Oracle, being over-laid with pure Gold, and a prodigious Sum of its Ministering Vessels in their entire Substance of the same also. It is farther to be remarked the infinite
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Quantity of precious Stones (to add their Lustre likewise, and as it were represent the sparkling Stars in that Image of the Universe) which were every where disposed in proper Places by the Sides of the Structure, and in the Robes of the Priests of the first Orders. One would think the Earth to have been plundered of all its brightest, most refined Stores it had beforehand, all of these transferred hither, and that if such afterwards were afforded Mankind, they must be produced, and formed a-fresh in its hidden Laboratories. The whole again of God's Appointment, he having given the Pattern thereof to *David* in writing, which he left with a mighty Furniture of these most valuable Things he had gathered, to his Son *Solomon*, who was to accomplish that great Work, *1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12, 13, 19.* the Temple it self, with all things bearing Relation to it, whatsoever was required for that Sacrificial Worship, and Service, was exceedingly resplendent, and expressed a Grandeur above what could be seen any where else, that so People might be re-minded whose Dwelling-place it was, to whom it belonged, and might thence be enforced to reflect on his Greatness, that he is the Lord of the whole Earth, when they here appeared before him, in the stated Times of their Prayers, and Thanksgivings, and so more devotionally offer these up with an Holy Fear upon their Minds.

As Musick also was appointed at their Solemn Assemblies in the Tabernacle, First, Two Trumpets of Silver only, to be then Sounded *in the Day of their Gladness*, any of the frequent Occasions afforded them of acknowledging a special Mercy, *and over their Burnt-offerings, and over their Peace-offerings*, particularly on *the Day of the great Atonement*, *Numb. x. 10. Levit. xxv. 9.* but afterwards the Number of Trumpets were augmented to an Hundred and Twenty, with Three Instruments more, *viz*, Cymbals,

bals, Psalteries, Harps added thereto, we read no less than Four Thousand were ordained to assist with these in the New Division, and setting of the Courses of the *Levites* by *David*, 2 *Chron.* v. 12. 1 *Chron.* xxiii. 5. and this again by God's especial Appointment to him, 2 *Chron.* xxix. 25. — 30. 12. That by this Means, from the greater Force, the stronger Movement of different Sounds in a just Harmony, and Consort together, the Affections of the People might be more stirred up, and their Minds elevated in their Solemn Service.

And as *Solomon* brought all these into his Temple with the other Orders of *David* his Father, thus authentically constituted by God, so we find this Effect of this Holy Melody at his Dedicating thereof. It raised their Spirits to such a more fervent Devotional Frame, so overcame their Earthly Temper, so mastered their fordid Love, and their Thoughts of this World, so transported, and carried them to Godwards, that he was pleased, (whoever seeks an Opportunity to communicate himself, and never fails to do so when a due Disposition on our side can receive him) he was then pleased to exhibit his especial Presence among them, no doubt but eminently in their Souls, as well as after a visible manner, for so we are told. *It came even to pass as the Trumpeters and Singers were as one, to make one Sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the Trumpets and Cymbals, and Instruments of Musick, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the House was filled with a Cloud, even the House of the Lord,* 2 *Chron.* v. 13. Which Benefit, as to its better Part, God's especial more Liberal Influences in our Spirits we may partake of by our due Behaviour in this Sanctuary of ours.

And seeing this Tabernacle, and this Temple, with the Sacred Furniture belonging to each, was not like the

the great, and wide Temple of the Universe immediately formed by God himself, but the Workmanship of Men, of such Materials as he first made, and assigned over to their Uses, with a Reserve of his Sovereign Title, and Right in them, to be still acknowledged to him, and claimed by him when he pleases. Therefore for a Tryal of their Affections towards him, with respect to the Possessions he had given them, whether they Loved him, and desired Communion with him in his Publick Worship above all things else, he commanded a Free-will Offering to be brought him, *Exod. xxv. 2.* on these Accounts, that they might present it, if their Hearts maintained their right Tendency, and were principally set to him, or if their unthankful degenerate Spirits were determined otherwise on the Stores of this World, his Temporal Bounties, not himself, they might refuse such a just Homage, and Fealty of theirs, they might keep, and detain it with the Curse that followed it. And we find, as to the Tabernacle, God's first Place of special Residence, among the *Jews*, that *for the generality* they gave very liberally, no doubt but *there were some*, whose either Impiety, as being quite void of any Sense of Religion, or whose Covetousness deprived them of such an Honour, and Benefit: for so we read, *and they came every one whose heart stirred him up, whose Spirit made him willing,* (implying that all were not thus affected,) *and brought the Lord's Offering to the work of the Tabernacle, and for all his Service, and for the holy garments,* and dedicated so abundantly of the best Stores they had, whether Silver, or Gold, or whatever else they were possessed of, even their own Industry, and Art too, that *Moses* at last was forced to restrain them from offering any more, *Exod. xxxv. 21, 22. — xxxvi. 3, 6.* And as to the Temple, we find that *David*, in his Poverty, or his Troubles, as he speaks, *having set his affections on the House of*

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of his God, of his own proper Goods, what he had reserved of the Tribute of the Government from his Royal State, gave three thousand talents of Gold, of the Gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined Silver, 1 Chron. xxix. 2, 4. besides what he had prepared, as he tells us in another Place, the Treasures he had amassed, (as we may well suppose) by his Victories, and Conquests, his Spoils of War laid up for this Purpose, the Tribute, and Presents that he constantly received from his Neighbour-Princes, which amounted to a Sum that did not so agree with his Stile of his Poverty, but he would still have given more to God, *viz. an hundred thousand talents of Gold, and a thousand thousand talents of Silver, without the Estimate of Brass, and Iron, that could not be estimated, and precious Stones of all sorts, 1 Chron. xxii. 14. --xxvi. 27. --xxix. 2.* And the chief of the Fathers, and the Princes of the Tribes of *Israel* made vast Oblations, as the Common People likewise, the rest of the Congregation very liberally dedicated of their scantier Provision, the less they had to spare from the necessary Uses, and Supplies of Life. *They offered willingly to the Lord with a perfect heart, and greatly rejoiced, accounting it his Gift that they could do so, Ver. 6, 7, 8, 9.* And we are told also, that the poor Captives, and Exiles restored under *Zerubbabel*, according to their Ability, offered freely towards the re-building of the Temple, and *to set it up in its place again, Ezra ii. 68, 69.*

And for the Support of both these his so beautiful, and glorious Mansions, God appointed by *Moses* a Contribution, every Man a like, half a Shekel, the Ransom of his Soul at the Numbring of the People, peculiarly appropriate to the Service of the Tabernacle, *Exod. xxx. 12, 13, &c.* For the Reception whereof King *Solomon* built a certain Repository on the Side of his Temple, called *the Treasury of the House of the Lord, 1 Chron. xxvi. 20. ---xxviii. 12. Mark. xii. 41.*

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The Ancient Rabbies commonly affirm this to have been a continual Yearly Oblation from its first Institution ; and indeed, however it might have been discontinued, we find it collected with a particular Reference to *Moses*, being stiled his Collection laid upon *Israel*, both by King *Joash*, and *Nehemiah*, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 6, 9. *Nehem.* x. 32. And 'twas a constant Annual Payment in the Times of the Second Temple, and when our Saviour came, *Mat.* xvii. 24. into which Treasure the People also, whose Hearts, and whose Substance enabled them for it, cast their Voluntary Offerings, Kings, and Rich Men, *of their abundance* in our Saviour's Expression, Soldiers of their Acquests in War, 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 26, 27. All this was an Holy Revenue for the Temple to maintain it against the devouring Attacks of Time, to which it was left liable with other Structures, its Relation to God not securing it from such, not engaging Miracles for its Perpetuity, and to repair its Breaches, when those should thus happen, and still to preserve it in its just, and as near as might be, its first Beauty.

Hence we see God's own Appointment, and Designation of an House to be dedicate to him, where he would dwell and vouchsafe an especial Communion with those, who should devoutly attend him there, and that this was to be built in such a Magnificence befitting his Majesty, at the Charges of People, if we may so speak, and by their free Contributions, as was but requisite, he having given them all at first, and on the Account of this bounden Act of theirs, engaging such further Favours to them of all sorts ; And that the *Israelites* being sensible of both these (which we must suppose to have had each their Influence to the Effect) offered so liberally as they did. All this we see so set forth on God's Part, and theirs.

And notwithstanding that the Temple was a Type of our Saviour's Body, which he stiled a Temple, and a far more

more curious Artifice, and infinitely more glorious at least after his Resurrection, in which the God-head dwelt so eminently; and that Prayers, and Sacrifices being only ordained in this Temple, and confined thereto, so as that they might be accepted, and obtain the Blessings engaged to them, did denote that we could only have Access to God, and our Supplications be effectual thro' our Lord's Intercession, and that to this blessed Event too, we must be sure to Sacrifice all our sensual, and corrupt Desires, which was so figured in the Legal Service, and which our Saviour for our Example, performed so perfectly in himself; yet nevertheless as one might have presented a pure Spiritual Worship alone in the Temple of Prayer, or Thanksgiving, without the Typical Atonement of a Beast slain, of which we have the Instances in *David*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 18, &c. in *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* xix. 14. and other Worthies of that Dispensation, and that 'tis called by our Saviour, *the House of Prayer* from the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Mat.* xxi. 13. *Isa.* lvi. 7. and as the Text in its plain coherence refers to Christians, and foretells such Sanctuaries to be built among them, we must take what was commanded, and done here, for an Admonition, and Pattern to us, that we ought to erect peculiar Houses to God, and his Worship, and heartily and largely, (which latter will ever follow the former) according to our Abilities, or of his own Stores he has entrusted with us contribute thereto.

From whence we may think the Tabernacle, and Temple having been not improbably the first Houses built to God, and for the solemn Acts, and Performance of *Religion*, which is such a natural Dictate of Reason, Men worshipping him before after divers manners under some certain Attribute of his, as apprehended alone, and distinctly from the rest, his Power, his Goodness; or on the Account of some of his beneficent Works, the Sun especially,

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in which, the vulgar, no doubt, often terminated their Devotion, tho' we cannot believe so of their Philosophers, and more knowing sort, I say Men thus worshipping before that time *on high hills, and among green trees* as the Prophets speak, *Jer. ii. 20. ---xxxv. 13. Isa. lvii. 5, 7.* in Groves, or Woods, we may well think that from the Tabernacle, and Temple thus specially erected at God's Command, and in all Likelyhood the first of their kind, both the *Jews* built so many Synagogues for the pure Service of Prayers, and praises without Sacrifice, some whereof Noble Structures too, which, they reckoning a meritorious Instance, and a great Benefaction done by any, was not disapproved, or denied to be such by our Lord himself, *Luke vii. 5.* and that from hence the Christians also built, and set apart certain Fabricks to God, and our Saviour, for their solemn Worship; as we read even in the Times of the Apostles, and with their Authority, which infallibly explains the Text in Fact, according to the Sense laid down of *Churches*, *1 Cor. xi. 18, 20, 22. --- xiv. 34.* that must be there understood *Houses*, where they met together on this Account, answerable to our frequent Acceptation now of the Word *Church*, not bare Assemblies, and which was the Acceptation of the most approved, and celebrated Fathers in their Commentaries on these Places. And tho' at the Beginning when their Doctrine was so opposed, and themselves persecuted, and besides being mostly of the poorer, illiterate sort, who in their happier Circumstance were both delivered from the opiated Pride of Learning, and the Inveiglements of the World, which so hindred the Conversion of others, their accepting a plain Self-denying Doctrine, as the Apostle testifies, *1 Cor. i. 26. not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble,* embracing this Faith. *Have any of the Rulers, or the Pharisees believed on him? viz. on Christ, say these great ones themselves,* *John vii. 8.* tho'

at the Beginning we cannot otherwise suppose, but that then those Houses were mean, and ordinary, not perhaps better for the Habitation of God, than for their private Dwellings, as Oratories then, neither their Estates, nor the Restraints they were under allowing more, often were in their own Houses, *Col. iv. 15. Philem. i. 2.* yet in the Intervals they enjoyed of Liberty of their Consciences, that be sure then could be no Sham-pretence, where the grossest Idolatry was the State-Worship, distinguished from their own in its whole Substance, not only as to some innocent different Modes, in which Liberty alone they always acquiesced with Thankfulness to God, never complaining that they were restrained from Places in the Government, who had no other Aims, but Religion in their Minds, and its Rewards in Heaven, no Earthly Interest that is so inconsistent with Religion, that where it is the Principle at the Bottom, ever defeats Men of those Rewards; when their holy Profession was allowed them, whether by publick Edict, or the favourable Connivance of some humane, tho' Heathen Emperor, not so transported with his own Greatness, more influenced by the Compassion of Nature, and his common Mortality, tho' not so rightly considering their Cause, they then every where erected, especially in Cities, as their Wealth could administer to that its chiefest Use, and End, ample Structures to the Honour of God, and for the Purpose of his Solemn Service, according to what *Eusebius* tells us; The Holy Fathers, and Bishops by their large Encomiums on such Works of Piety, in the Account whereof they always reckoned these, and by their pressing Exhortations, which were of such Prevalency in those Days, and by their own Examples, according as they were able, inciting ever thereto. And when the Great *Constantine*, turning Christian himself, obtained the *Empire*, and so encouraged, and
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patronized his Fellow-Believers, He, and they almost universally *in its wide Extent*, reared up the most magnificent Edifices, far transcending whether his or their own Houses, as is fit those should be, which are dedicate to God, who upon the greatest Equity requires, when the Instance immediately respects himself, the best of all kinds, that he affords us, which we may infer ought in Reason to be such, if he accept it; or if we would not bring an Imprecation upon our selves thro', and by means even of that we present him, and surrender into his Hands again. For so he speaks by his Prophet, *Cursed be the deceiver, which bath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen*, Mal. i. 14. Upon this Ground it is what our Learned and Pious *Mede* advises, that God's Houses among us, should exceed all others both in their Stateliness, and proper Ornaments, even Palaces so stiled, whether in City or Country, that being indeed not worthy of God, which is not the best in that Particular, whereof it is *P. 406*. And we may conclude such his Houses were, in the Times of this Glorious Emperor, and after, answerable to Palaces, even those of Kings, and commanding Reverence when entred into, by the appropriate Words by which they then called them. *Βασιλικὴ βεμνεία.*

Thus we see what Sumptuous Houses both Jews, and Christians built to God, and with what signal Alacrity of Spirit, and how bountifully they dedicated of their Substance thereto, and indeed what we give even on this Account more immediately to him for his Dwelling among us in his more Liberal Dispensations, and Graces, and so be sure for our greatest Benefit too, if we duly address him in such his special Habitations with an unanimous Worship, which ever is of more avail, what we give even on this

Account, unless it proceed from a chearful Mind, with our strongest Affections towards God, and our Heart in it, be an Oblation of this also, which is what he especially delights in, and all that we have of our own to give him, it will be despised by him, he will reject both it, and us.

What therefore shall we say of those People who contribute reluctantly their less Proportions, thro' the Constraint of Law only, not to the building, but repairing or beautifying of God's Houses, where they were built before, but that nevertheless having the Advantage of the Gospel-Revelation, and the Stile of Christians, they are far worse in the Habit of their Spirits, than those ancient *Jews* were, have less Love of God, less Sense of his Honour, or Gratitude to him; have Hearts more engaged in these worldly things, are more united to them, embrace them more closely, chuse them before him to centre upon, or for their Stay, and Support, and by this means, which is the lamentable Consequence of all, while they contribute on such a Compulsion, both lose their Mammon, and the Recompence of it: Whereas performing this freely, they might render it an acceptable Sacrifice to God, and thereby draw down his manifold Blessings into their Souls; but now preferring their Money to such an immediate Instance, and Instinct of Religion towards him, they plainly evidence, that they have no due Quality, or Temper in their Spirits to receive his Graces, nay that they are liable to other Measures from him, as being so quite averse to him, which is well declared by their Unconcern for those things that are consecrated to his Honour, and bear his Name upon them. I hope such a Disregard to God's Sanctuary, such a Baseness, and Disaffection to him, such an Idolizing of Money, such a Value of this before God's Favour, and above any Spiritual Blessings from him, which his Favour, and Blessings are to be obtained by those Acts principally among the others, that the Gospel enjoins, of despising the World, and disesteeming all things in Comparison of him; Such a wicked, such a worse than *Jewish* Heart I hope will not be found in any of us, who belong to our now so improved Place of Worship, not only beyond what most Men could have thought was possible in its Fabrick, but every way besides.

Now then a Beautiful House of our Prayers, and Praises, with the proper Utensils to that Purpose, even the grave Musick of the Organ also to give our Spirits, a farther Elevation in the Divine Service,

Service, as we cannot but experience such its Effect, all this being so expedient, such a principal Part of Justice towards God, expressly required, and ordained by him; and besides the Obedience we owe him, so profitable for our selves.

Let us hear what Objections may be made thereto. Which, where the Thing is so just, and reasonable, must have their Foundation either in Ignorance, or in a certain Peculiarity of Temper (with which some are gifted) that loves to contradict.

And First it may be, and is said that they are mostly Old-Testament Authorities here produced on this Account, that do not concern the Gospel-State, which requires a Spiritual Worship. But as to the Authorities it may be answered, That *Isaias* was always counted an Evangelical Prophet, an Apostle, under the Legal Dispensation, the Subject of his Book being principally *Christ*, the plainest Descriptions of him before-hand, whereby he might be known, when he did come, and of the Light, and Blessings to the World thro' him, particularly the Chapter of my Text, most evidently refers, (as has been shewn already) to the Preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and their Accession to the Christian-Church. So that the Text is a Precept in Prophecy, even to those, whose Natures are most renewed, or should be so, the Disciples of our Spotless, Crucified Saviour, not of *Moses*, as *St. John* tells us, that these Devotional Helps, viz. Instruments of Musick, shall be used by the Inhabitants of the Heavenly *Jerusalem* in their New Songs there, (that none could learn but those Redeemed Ones,) before the Throne of the Lamb, *Revel. v. 8. —xiv. 2, 3.*

And besides every Precept of the Old-Testament, that stands on a Reason, which changes not, absolutely obliges without respect to Time now, or then, and maintains a perpetual Force, no ways needing to be repeated for its farther Sanction in the Gospel; 'tis an Eternal Truth with regard to the Natures, and Relations of Things, and as long as these continue the same. And therefore, if Men now be like those before, if the Communication still remain in us between our Senses, and our Souls; if proper Objects can, as it were, be let into our Souls thro' Eyes, and Ears, and proportionably excite Affections there, as in Days of Old; If we can be so advantaged, and have farther Fervours in our Acts of Worship, or Hymns of Thanksgiving from Solemnity of Place, Harmonious Sounds, Instrumental and Vocal Musick together, which the former Ages so much experienced; if we be the same
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sort of Creatures, compounded of the same Parts, and Organs, and liable to the same Impressions upon them, and the same inward Movements by their means, then we must allow that the Texts fore-mentioned concern us likewise, and are both Instructions and Laws to us. There is no way to evade this Inference, but to belye our Constitution, and deny the Sensations we feel in our Spirits upon such Occasions, and Excitements offered.

And directly to satisfy that Part of the Objection, our Christian Worship has the Account of a Spiritual Service, not because it is performed without the Helps of our Senses, and the Fervours or Passions that are raised thence, for that is impossible in this State at least; but because it is opposite to the carnal Ordinances, and as it were material, and manual Service of Sacrificing Beasts among the *Jews*, and consists in Sacraments, or Representatives of our Saviour's Sacrifice, and in acting this within us on our Sensual Affections, Sacrificing these, and in Prayers, or Supplications and Praises only.

But then it may be further urged, that if we duly maintain our indigent Brethren, God's Living Temples, *his own Buildings*, in whom he most especially dwells, which is so frequently charged upon us in the Gospel of our Saviour, and may therefore seem our first Obligation, we need not so much concern our selves for the other Fabricks that we erect, and dedicate to him. But besides the lost Affection towards God, and Indifferency to his Worship that must imply in People, when they can see without Disturbance *the Houses of his Glory, or Residence* among us in a rude Circumstance, far short of the Stateliness, or Ornament of *their own*; and besides that, the erecting of such Houses for our united Addresses to God, or bestowing upon them their proper Beauty is indeed an higher Charity, as it more directly conveys its Benefits to the Souls of our Brethren, affording them the Opportunity of maintaining, and strengthening the Sense of Religion, the just Apprehension of God in their Minds, which, *without publick Worship* would be mainly lost, and of their partaking of the freer Graces that attend this. Besides all this, we have a plain Instruction from our Blessed Saviour in Two Instances, that we may make an Offering to God, and his Sanctuary, even in the first Place, and before we consider the Indigencies of the Poor, (whom he tells us at the same Time, we shall ever have with us, as we may be convinced we always shall in this degenerate State, while thro' our
great

great Wickedness unrepented of, we so hinder God's Love, and Blessings towards us) and these Instances are, First, The Woman's pouring the Ointment on his Head, which in *Judas's* Estimate might have been sold for three hundred Pence, and given to the poor, however no question 'twas very valuable, *John*, xii. 3, &c. nevertheless this he there justifies, and therein all our other Expences relating to God. The other Instance is, which he so much extolls, (and the Act could not be laudable, unless the End were) the poor Widow's casting into the Treasury, which was a Fund for the Repairs, and beautifying of the Temple. These are evident Arguments in this Particular, even from our Saviour Christ himself.

I shall only urge, by way of Application, in a few Words, what has been the Purport of the whole Discourse, that seeing God commanded that Houses, or Sanctuaries should be appropriately built to him, where he would especially dwell, in the Phrase of *Moses*, *Ex. xxv. 22.* and Meet us, *viz.* more plenteously communicate himself in a gracious Return to our Meeting him, our publick and bounden Worship of him there; and seeing he required a voluntary Tribute from the *Jews*, according to their Abilities, of the Substance they were severally possessed of, to this purpose, which, being an Eternal Duty of Gratitude to him, who gives all things, lies upon us likewise, that we should also render him back a Liberal Portion of his own Goods in our Custody, but which he would receive from us in our Free Act, to the same pious Ends, where these are not yet answered, and where we are more particularly concerned, *viz.* if not to the erecting of his Houses among us in their just Magnificence, yet at least to the adorning of those due Fabricks, that our religious Ancestors have left us (which is our Case) after the best manner, so that they may be distinguished by their proper kind of Grandeur, and Beauty, from all others for our private Accommodations, or where we dwell our selves; and seeing that such so recovering the Thoughts of their Almighty Inmate, are apt to beget such an Awfulness in our Minds at our Approaches into them, which we may turn to the Advantage of our Worship, and manage, and fix into a more raised and intense Devotion; And seeing we have the Apostles themselves, (Histories telling us of many Churches then built by their Authority in the several Countries of their Apostleship or Ministry) and the Christians next succeeding them, whom we may very well think most partaked of their Spirit; seeing we have these our Patterns to such religious Works, that were ever improved in Augustness, and Splendour, as God gave his Son in some measure what he

he promised him, *Isa. lx. 11.* the wealth of the Gentiles, as Kings came over to that Holy Society, as their Numbers increased with their Interest in the World, and their Share of the Possessions thereof, the most esteemed ancient Fathers (Testimonies I believe might be produced from every one of them) commending these Instances, and exhorting to the like; and seeing that by God's good Hand upon us of this Place and Parish, all this is abundantly done with respect to our Low Estate, our Church, inferiour to few before, not only so beautified, but exceedingly advantaged, and even strengthened in its Structure too, which will be our lasting Honour with the Safeguard of Providence, for long Prosperities. Let none of us murmur against the Charges that are so peculiarly laid out towards God, but contribute cheerfully what our several Proportions may be, and make that, which our good Laws for the Maintenance of Publick Worship, compell us to, a voluntary Oblation, and so available with God, who is never wanting in his Rewards of our Affections to him, not only that he should increase his Blessings upon us of the Temporal Kind, and Sanctifie these to us in our Uses of them, but also diffuse his Heavenly Gifts, or his Blessed Self after the freest Measures, and Manner in our Souls. As for me I freely dedicate to *this House of his Preence*, of what he has given me, humbly desiring his gracious Acceptance of that which is so due from me, and I hope the same Disposition so required of all Christians, all reasonable Creatures on this same Account, will be in every one of you also, He grant it may, that so this adorning, and beautifying of his House, with your constant Attendance on him therein, may be a Cause, and Means to you of a larger Participation of his Favour, and Graces; not of his Displeasure towards any of you, and of the hardning of your Hearts against him, while by refusing this his just Homage to be paid by us, you set your selves in a resolved Defiance of him, you deny his Providence, and Sovereignty over you, and solely set up, whether for the keeping, or procuring your Fortunes, on your own pure Contrivance and Fore-cast, which must ever be disappointed without him among the cross Events of things, which, where such an obdurate, such an Atheistical Temper is, will be ever blasted by him, unless Riches be allowed you as your whole Portion in this World, unless they be given you for your Hurt, not a Blessing. Your willing Contribution would be a great glorying to me, and I would perswade my self of you, my Brethren, that you will not hinder or deprive me thereof.

I shall only now repeat the Words of *David* on the like Occasion, with my own Affection in them, *1 Chron. xxix. 14, &c.* *All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine have we given thee. I know also my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness, as for me in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered, and I hope I may have the same Joy, that he says he had, to see thy people who are present here to offer willingly, and that we may all Pray with good Nehemiah, and have the same Ground of our Requests to Heaven. Remember me O my God concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the House of my God. Remember me O my God for good, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy, ch. xiii. 14, 22, 31*

F I N I S.

